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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 011205

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SUBJECT: RESTREPO OUTLINES AUC DEMOBILIZATION PROCESS TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS

REF: A) BOGOTA 10728 B) BOGOTA 10687

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Summary: On October 26, Peace Commissioner Luis Carlos Restrepo presented the government's demobilization plan for the United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) to the diplomatic corps. Seven AUC groups will demobilize between November 3 and December 18 and the GOC continues to insist that the AUC groups operating in the eastern plains follow suit. Demobilization will last up to 48 days: 15 to 30 days to prepare the demobilization zone, two to ten days for the paramilitaries to disarm, and eight days to leave the zone and report to government reinsertion centers. During this time, the Prosecutor General's Office (Fiscalia) will determine which of the demobilized are guilty of major crimes. Those guilty will be required to remain in government-controlled areas until the Law for Justice and Reparation passes. According to Restrepo, paramilitary murders have gone down 67 percent and massacres 83 percent since the cease-fire began. Diplomatic corps reaction was subdued; no one present was openly critical but most want more details. End Summary.

2. (C) On October 26, Restrepo presented a detailed demobilization plan to the diplomatic corps. He prefaced his power-point presentation by reiterating the pre-condition for negotiating with the AUC and guerrilla groups: a public demonstration of will to abandon violence, to which only the AUC had so far agreed. He emphasized that there was no distinction in bringing these groups to justice, and that there would be no mass pardons. He described the process not as a political negotiation, but as a negotiation that, if turned out right, would lead to a real political negotiation that could bring these groups into the democratic mainstream of the country.

3. (C) Restrepo then described how the demobilization would proceed on a day-to-day basis and which groups would demobilize. Between November 3 and December 18 the following AUC groups will concentrate and demobilize:

- Self Defense Forces of Catatumbo (eastern Norte de Santander)
- Lower and Upper Sinu Self Defense Forces (western Cordoba)
- The Bananero Front (northwestern Antioquia)
- The Southeastern Antioquia Front
- The Pacific Front (coastal Cauca and Valle del Cauca)
- The Self Defense Forces of Cundinamarca (northern Cundinamarca)
- The Calima Bloc (Cauca and Valle del Cauca)

4. (C) Restrepo noted that the government continues to insist that the AUC groups operating in the eastern plains -- the Centauros Bloc, the Vanquishers of Arauca, and the Self Defense Forces of Meta and Vichada -- demobilize before the end of this year. (He did not mention the independent Self Defense Forces of Casanare, which have suffered heavy military blows).

5. (C) Stressing the need for flexibility, Restrepo gave the following time line:

-- Preparation: 15 to 30 days (GOC provides security for the demobilization zone and formerly occupied areas, conducts community outreach, and transports paramilitaries to the zone. The paramilitaries submit a list of who is demobilizing).

-- Concentration, demobilization, and identification: two to ten days (disarmament, minors turned over to the Family Welfare Institute, OAS verifies list, and GOC conducts survey of paramilitaries and provides basic humanitarian assistance).

-- Exiting demobilization zone: eight days (demobilized return home and report to local reinsertion centers. These centers will be in urban areas where the demobilized live).

6. (C) According to Restrepo, the Fiscalia would begin investigating each demobilizing individual once the list is submitted. However, because the paramilitaries will remain in the demobilization zone for only two to ten days, the Fiscalia will not finish the investigations until after they leave. Investigations are still underway in Medellin, more than a year after the demobilization of the Cacique Nutibara

Bloc. Once the Fiscalía determines who is guilty of an unpardonable crime (serious violations of human rights or narcotics trafficking), those individuals will be required to remain in government-controlled areas until they are given an alternative sentence under the "Law of Justice and Reparations." Restrepo noted that time spent in these controlled areas could reduce the alternative sentence.

17. (C) As outlined in ref A, the government is offering economic incentives, including preferential credit, to private companies which provide jobs to the demobilized.

18. (C) Restrepo acknowledged that the cease-fire has not been perfectly observed. He reported, however, that between February 2001 to November 2002 and December 2002 to September 2004 paramilitaries murders dropped 67 percent (1,172 versus 390 murders). During the same time frames paramilitary-perpetrated massacres dropped 83 percent (100 versus 17 massacres). According to Restrepo, between June 2000 to July 2002 and August 2002 to September 2004, the military has captured 300 percent more paramilitaries, killed 229 percent more, and seized 286 percent more paramilitary weapons. He said that this process should result in the demobilization of approximately 30 to 35 percent of the AUC before the end of 2004.

19. (C) The reaction of the diplomatic corps was subdued but not openly critical. Following the meeting, some Europeans expressed concern about the lack of specifics in the concentration and monitoring phase, the short period of time the paramilitaries would remain in the demobilized zone (two to ten days), and the slow movement in the Congress of the "Law of Justice and Reparations." The law will be critical in dealing with fighters wanted for serious human rights violations or narcotrafficking and senior leaders remaining in the special concentration zone at Santa Fe de Ralito.

WOOD